

History and heritage



Sedbergh is perfectly placed between the Lakes and Dales, nestling at the foot of Alfred Wainwright's Howgills, the ideal place to escape to with your partner or family for relaxing days out or week-long getaways.

It's brim full of history, the Celts, Romans, Saxons, Vikings, Normans have all played their part in shaping this place, as have scholars, scientists, and more contemporary Victorian industrialists... this two day sample itinerary provides a few ideas of what you can see and do.

Day 1 Morning

Visit [Brough Castle](#) and discover this stark and impressive castle, which stands on the site of a former Roman fort 'Verteris' that dominated the Stainmore Pass.

Brough Castle was frequently besieged by the Scots and was captured and burnt several times. Its towering keep dates from about 1200, more comfortable living quarters were added later by members of the Clifford family, only to be burnt down following a 'great Christmas party' in 1521.

Like so many other castles in the Eden Valley, Brough was restored in the 17th century by Lady Anne Clifford, traces of whose additions can still be seen.

Lunch

Time to enjoy a hearty bite to eat at [The Moorcock Inn](#), Garsdale.

Afternoon

You can continue your historic exploration after lunch with a visit to [Pendragon Castle](#), Mallerstang, near Outhgill, which dominates the banks of the River Eden, famous for its associations with the legend of King Arthur and reputedly home to Arthur's father Uther Pendragon. Despite those romantic associations the first properly recorded fortification on the site was an early twelfth century ringwork castle, which had a stone tower added a little while later.

One infamous owner was rather well known, one Hugh de Morville, who In addition to being Lord of Westmorland he's also one of the four knights who murdered the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Becket in Canterbury in 1170 after witnessing Henry II having a bit of a moan about troublesome priests.

Late afternoon, early evening

Return to Sedbergh and enjoy a leg stretch and discover the delights of [Castle Haw Tower](#) a particularly fine example of a Motte & Bailey Castle, with spectacular views across the valley which it would once have dominated, to this day it still has well-defined ditches, bailey, and motte.

This ancient military site has seen service in more recent times. In 1943 the site became part of the top secret 'Granite' system manned by the Royal Observer Corps and from 1965 the site was further developed with the construction of a new underground concrete bunker bristling with state-of-the-art electronic equipment designed to monitor the aftermath of a nuclear attack .

Day 2 Morning

Discover [Farfield Mill](#) the last of five working mills in Sedbergh and over 200 years of history. Today, the Mill is a fully restored Victorian woollen mill, the only working mill left in the Western Dales, complete with its original working looms. Alongside this the Mill is also home to one of the UK's leading venues for textile arts, a vibrant community of 20 resident artisan makers, with a further 60 makers showcasing traditional and contemporary arts and crafts on site. Throughout the year visitors can explore the Heritage displays, experience the working looms in action, discover the regularly changing exhibitions, take part in the regular craft workshops and demonstrations.

Lunch

After a wander around the Mill enjoy lunch in the [Mill Café](#) and delight in a fabulous cakes, tray bakes, toasted tea cakes, and choice of hot and cold drinks.

Afternoon

Visit [Dent Village Museum and Heritage Centre](#) and discover what it was like to live and work in the Western Dales in years gone by, tracing the social history of this beautiful and secluded valley from Viking Times to the present day. Alongside exhibits detailing life on the land, visitors can also find out about the Terrible Knitters of Dent and the valley's part in the slave trade through the Sill family of Whernside Manor, as well as the valley's important part in the industrial revolution, learn about Dent marble used in buildings the world over the Tsar's Winter Palace in St Petersburg.

Late afternoon, early evening

Visit one of the oldest Quaker Meeting Houses in the UK. Raised in 1675, [Brigflatts](#), near Sedbergh is renowned for its simplicity and is seen as a true vernacular gem, a simple stone and lime washed building, with simple mullioned windows, oak door, and oak interior panelling and benches, is set in a small garden, surrounded by tranquil fields bounded by the nearby River Rawthey.